

# Bulgaria

## I. Picturesque People of the Peasant State

By H. Charles Woods

Author of "War and Diplomacy in the Balkans"

THE Bulgarians are a quasi-Slavonic people grown out of the fusion of certain Mongol or Finnish tribes, called Bulgarians, who came from Asia during the seventh century, with a larger number of Slavs at that time already in the Balkan Peninsula. Almost crushed out of existence by five centuries of Turkish rule, they occupy a considerable part of the Central Balkans, for in addition to constituting two-thirds of the population of their own country, they spread over into the kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, who are pure representatives of the Southern Slavs, into Greece, Rumania, and even Albania. For this reason the position of Bulgaria is different from that of the neighbouring countries; for whereas each of those countries has now been so augmented in size that at present they are faced by racial and religious problems of far greater importance and difficulty than heretofore, Bulgaria, practically unhampered by

home ethnological difficulties, is surrounded by terra irredenta to a degree unequalled elsewhere in the Near East.

The Bulgarians are a healthy, sturdy, peasant people, the physique of the rural population being markedly superior

to that of the townsmen or upper classes. Short in stature, thick-set, and muscular in build, the height of the men (usually about five feet eight inches) is out of proportion to that of the women, who do not average more than five feet four inches. Without any claims to smartness or good looks, the Bulgarians are clearly not of a true Slavonic type, and a sort of Finnish appearance is often noticeable in them. Both sexes, but particularly the men, have large bones, hands, and feet in proportion to their size, their wrists and ankles being noticeably thick. With somewhat square heads, the face is usually oval, the features large and rugged, the skin rough and the complexion swarthy. Usually dark and never red-haired, the eyes generally grey, the nose straight and



BEAUTY OF THE SOUTH

The corset-like bodice and skirt are of brightly-coloured material. Silk stockings and dainty Viennese shoes complete the pretty costume of this attractive maid



#### NOVEL METHOD OF FORDING RIVERS IN SOFIA DISTRICT

In early spring, when the snows have melted and the riverbeds have become dangerous to pedestrians, the peasants resort to many ingenious methods in order that their business routine shall not suffer hindrance. Here are two Bulgarians mounted on stilts, and although their progress be somewhat tardy, they nevertheless succeed in crossing many an inundated piece of land which would be quite untraversable to their less venturesome fellows

*Photo, Balkan News Agency*

the jaw rather heavy, the women as well as the men are extraordinarily strong and hardy, and are capable of withstanding privations and overcoming difficulties in a manner which has largely contributed to the continued existence of their race and nationality.

Although an educated Bulgarian can understand an educated Serbian, and although the Cyrillic alphabet is used by both peoples, there are certain distinctions between the languages spoken in the two countries and by the two races. In Bulgaria, Turkish is much more widely understood than in old Serbia, that is, the territory which was Serbian before the Balkan Wars, because

there are more Turks in the country and because all its older generation were brought up under Ottoman rule. Again, whereas the Slavic form of speech was thoroughly assimilated by the original Bulgarians, their present day representatives postfix the article and employ certain other modifications not known elsewhere. In disposition, too, even more than in language, the Bulgarians as a race are different from their pure-blooded Slavonic neighbours. They are less quick-witted, less excitable, and less vivacious than the Serbs. But nobody who has seen the former people, as the writer has, in their earlier days of rapid advancement and in their



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post-war hours of adversity, can fail to recognize that hard work, patience, and determination are among their outstanding characteristics. Silent, dogged, and proud, they are resentful rather than complaining, and these traits, together with a sort of feeling of superiority, make the Bulgarians callous as to the attitude of foreigners and indifferent whether or not they and their national problems are understood abroad. On the other hand, the energy and efficiency of all classes account for the facts that Bulgaria became a prosperous country within a few years after her liberation, that she was the first of the Balkan States to organize a modern army, and that the administration has always been above the Near Eastern average. The conduct of the population is that of bluff peasants.

Neither the men nor the women are ingratiating, but they are not affected or repellent. Simplicity and thrift are exceedingly marked. Temperance among all classes is very noteworthy, and drunkenness is practically unknown among a people who, for the most part, only imbibe very small quantities of raki. All forms of sport, such as hunting, horseracing, football, and other games are at a discount; the young people amuse themselves by the performance of the national dance, and by singing on the village greens to the strains of native bagpipes, violins, and flutes, the older generation contenting themselves with reading and talking in the cafés which are to be found in every town and village. With a very high standard of morality, the streets are quiet and orderly at night, and young marriages, generally between



ROUGH-SHOD COUNTRY COUSINS ON SOFIA'S TILED TROTTOIR

The husband is generously sharing the family load with his wife—rather an unusual sight in Bulgaria. On market days, in particular, the peasant families may be seen trudging along in true Oriental fashion—the men in front walking unloaded, the women behind carrying the goods for sale. Their footgear is by no means cumbersome, and this quaint one-piece leather shoe is much favoured in many of the Balkan States





#### IN THE HEYDAY OF HEALTH AND HAPPINESS

Cool and composed, these comely sisters probably know what a pleasing picture they make by the side of the old village well. This costume, one of the many varieties of Bulgarian national dress, is home-spun and home-made, and displays its owner's love of gaudy colours



#### THE STURDY MEN AND WOMEN WHO MAKE "THE PEASANT STATE"

The Bulgarians, or Bulgars, are said to be descended from a Tartar tribe, who, towards the end of the seventh century swept over from the East and took possession of most of the Balkan territory. When the Turks appeared in the fourteenth century, Bulgaria became a province of European Turkey

*Photos, Balkan News Agency*





#### SPICK AND SPAN NATIVES OF BELOGRADCHIK DISTRICT

Bulgarian peasants lead a simple existence. They are thrifty, and work hard, but they generally work for themselves, the proportion of labourers who work for wages on other men's lands being extremely limited. They have their few acres to till, and on the produce manage to live



#### BULGARIAN MOTHERS' PRIMITIVE METHOD OF BABY-CARRYING

These young mothers realise that the ancient custom of carrying their babies behind their backs in slings leaves the arms free to undertake household duties. The peasants marry early in life, and large families are common; a household numbering only two or three children would be quite an exception

*Photos, Balkan News Agency*



twenty-five and twenty-eight years of age, are usual. Indeed, the ideal of the ordinary Bulgarian is to become engaged to a girl, and then to go to America with a small party of friends in order to earn sufficient money to stock a farm.

Meanwhile, the girl, who is seldom allowed to go into domestic service, spends all her time in spinning the flax, weaving the material, and

sleeves, and skirt. Barefooted and barelegged in summer, she wears only this chemise and a handkerchief tied over her head, which carries two long plaits of hair, in many cases reaching below the waist, and frontals made of gold coins ploughed up in the fields. In winter and for best occasions this meagre covering is augmented by a pelisse of thick woollen cloth, usually dark blue, braided with red, and richly embroidered on the

breast and cuffs, by socks of hideous modern colours, and by clipjas—home-made sandal-like shoes. When the weather is severe a sheepskin, wool inside, is donned, and the head, throat, and bosom are wound about with a warm woollen scarf.

The men wear a thick, blue embroidered shirt, a cummerbund, and fairly tight, rough, white trousers with blanket leggings which, forming the sock, are kept in position by crossgartering. In addition, there are the coat-like jacket, embroidered on the sleeves and front, the Bulgarian kolpak (headdress), and the native clipjas. In winter the men, like the women, have sheepskins, cured with the yolk of egg to make them soft and pliable, and ornamented on the raw skin outside by stitches.

The kingdom of Bulgaria, shorn of its Aegean littoral by the

Treaty of Neuilly, is now the smallest Balkan country except Albania. It forms a sort of oblong, wedged in between Rumania on the north, Yugo-Slavia on the west, Greece on the south, and the Black Sea on the east, and therefore occupies a more or less middle position in the peninsula, controlling not only part of the great highway from Central Europe to Constantinople, but also



#### ORIENTALISM IN THE STREETS OF BULGARIA

The vanity of youth is apparent in the headdress of young Bulgarian women and those who possess fine heads of hair, by no means an unusual thing among the peasants, delight in long plaits and coin adornments

cutting out and making up the clothing for her trousseau.

The artistic temperament of the people, if it can be said to exist at all, comes out more clearly in their costumes than in any other way. The attire of the peasant woman, who spins with a distaff as she walks, consists of a chemise or dress elaborately embroidered in countless colours upon the breast,





#### FLORAL MASKS HIDE THE BLUSHES OF SOME BULGARIAN BRIDES

All the bride's artistic taste is centred in her headdress; be she poor or rich, she endeavours to make it as gorgeously ponderous as the strength of her head will allow. Fortunately, this gigantic floral burden and cap of coins are not worn for long but are soon replaced by the popular, and certainly more effective headdress—the simple wreath of flowers and leaves

*Photos, Balkan News Agency*





#### RADIANT MAY QUEENS IN FESTOON AND FINE FEATHERS

On Sundays and holidays in Bulgaria, gala costumes and handsome headdresses make their appearance. For very important events the flower-wreath is considered inadequate, and on an occasion such as this, when the most beautiful girls of the village have been chosen to dance a favourite ring dance, a profusion of coloured beads and jingling coins hang about the head and shoulders, while trails of brilliant flowers depend from a crested headdress

*Photo, Balkan News Agency*

sections of the natural routes leading from the southern bank of the Danube to the Adriatic and the Aegean. While one still hears talk of Bulgaria and of Eastern Rumelia, which have been united since 1885, for present-day purposes the country may be said to be divided into two principal parts by the Balkan range, which extends from the Black Sea on the east to the Yugo-Slav frontier on the west. To the north of this range the area, cultivated especially for wheat and maize, slopes down towards the Danube. To the south there are the tableland of Sofia and the plain of Eastern Rumelia, both of which are highly productive, and the confused district which goes to make up the Rhodope Balkan system.

Compared with England, Bulgaria is distinctly mountainous, for, in addition

to the Balkans proper, the western, south-western, and southern parts of the country are occupied by various groups or ranges, the most important of which are the Rila Planina to the south of Sofia, and the Rhodope Balkans which run parallel to the Aegean. But if there be few points of view which are not dominated by the "Balkans," i.e., the mountains, to the traveller who is accustomed to the sculptured forms of the Alps or the Apennines, or to the dazzling pinnacles of the Canadian or American Rockies, the eminences of Bulgaria are almost dull at first sight. Nevertheless, rising sometimes to elevations of nearly 10,000 feet and running to hogs' backs rather than to sharp peaks, these enormous, sometimes heavily-wooded bastions grow gradually more and more impressive. Consisting





*BULGARIA: RUSTIC BEAUTY AND LOCAL COLOUR*

The woodland surroundings form a suitable setting for the dainty figures of these village maidens, whose delightful home-made costumes lend such an artistic touch to the refreshing scene

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*Photo, Balkan News Agency*









#### AN OASIS IN THE DESERT FOR THE WEARY TRAVELLER

On the scorched hillside, where the blazing sun beats mercilessly the livelong day, and the rough road winds endlessly through parched pasture lands and crops of Indian corn, the wayside spring surrounded by cool, shadowy trees must come as a veritable godsend to the traveller in Bulgaria. Many of these wells are erected to the memory of some departed soul



#### PRACTICAL REMNANT OF THE OTTOMAN RULE

A Turkish custom still prevailing in Bulgaria is the erection of a fountain by some prosperous person as a memorial of his name. Sometimes it may be seen outside the village, in a prominent position near the road, that the eye of the traveller may easily detect it. In the village it is the centre of activity; housewives come and go, and the leisured villagers meet for a friendly chat

*Photos. Balkan News Agency*



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often of what appear to be chaotic masses rather than of regular lines, the flanks of these mighty bulwarks are seamed by deep-cut glens or valleys, some of which are followed by railways



WHERE TASTE AND GRACE UNITE  
Bulgarian costumes are well diversified. The silver waist-clasp is a noteworthy feature, as also the silken scarf thrown with such careless grace round her head

or roads, while others are traversed only by swift, often unbridged streams, which gush from fall to fall.

The climate is of the continental type, made up of extremes and contrasts, the

degrees of which are governed largely by the elevation of the particular district. In summer I have met with an intense tropical heat, especially in the sheltered Maritza valley, yet even at that season the temperature is often cooled by rain, and in the more mountainous districts, for instance at Sofia, the nights are cool and fresh. The winter is short but severe, and there are biting cold winds from the north and north-east, a zero or even lower temperature at night, and at the higher altitudes snow falls freely between November and April. This means that bird life moves south towards the Aegean, that domestic animals, which are often clothed in ear lappets and wadded blankets, have to be housed, and that the ploughs are stopped for about four months. Moreover, even as early as November I have known the telegraph lines broken down and the railways stopped by storms and snow, and the cold is such that the Danube is often blocked by ice and frequently even frozen over. Nevertheless, with the better-class houses provided with double windows and perhaps central heating, with a generally brilliant sunshine, and with a snow as dry as powder, the winter, as in Russia, is a season to be enjoyed. Sledges are the order of the day, the country people have leisure for indoor work which otherwise would go undone, and sanitary conditions, which in other circumstances might prove too primitive, seem adequate to meet the requirements of the situation.

Partly because of the great difference between the amount of water after the melting of the snows and at the end of the dry season, and partly owing to the lack of public works, the rivers, except the Danube, are not systematically navigated. The streams of the Rhodope Balkans and also the Maritza, the most important Bulgarian river after the Danube, are sometimes employed for floating logs and trees from place to place, but beyond that water communications have not yet been employed for the furtherance of trade. Moreover, irrigation, which might be difficult in view of the usual swiftness of the





THE BOOTBLACK IS A RECENT ADDITION TO SOFIA'S STREET CHARACTERS  
 Costumes, customs, and creeds vary in Bulgaria, but the opposition between the followers of the Crescent and the Cross appears to have been less severe and embittered in this country than in other parts of the Ottoman Empire. History proves that the Bulgarians held steadfastly to their own creed, and lived on fairly friendly terms with the Tomaks, those of their fellow-citizens who had accepted the religion of the Prophet





THE THRESHOLD OF THE FACTORY IS SPREAD WITH THE FRAGRANT CONTENTS OF THE ROSE-GATHERERS' BASKETS. Roses constitute the wealth of the Kazanlik district ; they are picked by the peasants and taken to the factory, where the juice is squeezed out in wooden presses. The weight of rose-leaves collected is enormous, and about 200-300 lb. of flowers yield one ounce of oil. Eastern Kumieta exports annually about 6,000 lb., valued at £12 to £14 per lb., of the rose essence, an infinitesimal quantity of which is sufficient to saturate a two-ounce bottle of pure alcohol

*Photo, C. Rider Noble*





#### COLOUR AND FRAGRANCE VIE WITH EACH OTHER IN RUMELIAN VALLEYS

In Rumelia, rose-farms cover great stretches of country, and Kazanlik is the centre of the popular and picturesque industry of rose-growing, and of the manufacture of the world-renowned otto of roses. On the sunny slopes of the Balkans, as far as the eye can reach, and in the sheltered valleys between the Balkans and the parallel mountain chains, lie resplendent rose-gardens



#### DAINTY ROSE-MAIDENS OF EASTERN RUMELIA

Like the rose of the French poet, the damask Queen of Kazanlik exists but "l'espace d'un matin." During the height of the season, three or four weeks in May and June, the blooms are gathered every morning before they are fully blown, an acre of ground producing about 100 lb. daily. To one who has visited these rose-gardens, the memory is for all time fraught with the splendour of their fragrance

*Photos, C. Rider Noble*



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currents and of the often deep furrowing of the channels, has not been carried out except in the immediate neighbourhood of Philippopolis.

Similarly, although one sees an endless succession of primitive mills, the Bulgarian, who is a plainsman, farmer, and peasant, has little or no appreciation of the value of water-power which is running to waste throughout the country. With a possible era of peace and re-trenchment ahead, and with the example

have for years been maintained in a passable state of repair. With railways, comparatively extensive progress has been made, for whereas at the time of her liberation in 1878 the country only possessed just over 300 miles of line, at the present moment approximately 1,500 miles are open. These railways, which are single lines, are all State-owned, well equipped, and efficiently run. This has always been particularly noticeable, for while before the war the visitor who



HOW THE PEASANTS SHOE THEIR TRANSPORT OXEN

As shown here, "horseshoes" are not the exclusive privilege of horses. In countries like Bulgaria, where the ox and the buffalo are the principal beasts of burden, shoes are likewise necessary; and this poor creature, with its usual dumb servility, patiently submits to the ordeal, made the more uncomfortable by the many precautions which the wary blacksmith has taken to insure that his person suffers no harm

and policy of Italy in the foreground, the present or the next generation will perhaps realize the desirability of and possess the funds necessary for harnessing the inexhaustible forces which exist in this direction for the purpose of making "white coal."

Although inadequate to her requirements, the communications of Bulgaria compare favourably with those in other Balkan countries. The roads, which are divided into national and district routes,

took the principal routes could be really well accommodated, even in the winter of 1920-1921, when transportation was in a terrible state throughout Central and Near Eastern Europe, the trains in Bulgaria were running better and more regularly, and were less dark, less cold, and less dirty than elsewhere.

The King, the system of government, and the people are democratic first, last, and all the time. Boris III., who honoured me with an audience of two





#### GATHERERS OF THE GRAPE IN A BULGARIAN VINEYARD

Grape-vines abound in Bulgaria, and especially in the district watered by the Blue Danube. The fruit is small but luscious, and grows in good-sized clusters. Harvesting the grape is a beloved occupation of the peasants; then, as never, they realize the significance of their proverb, which says "Song has no master," and the vineyards resound with lighthearted and joyous melodies



#### SUMMER SCENE IN THE "COUNTRY OF SMALL PEASANT FARMERS"

The land in Bulgaria is carefully cultivated; although manure is seldom or never used, the soil is so rich and the climate so clement that two crops are often harvested against one in higher latitudes. Even in their proverbs the Bulgarians pay tribute to the tiller of the soil: "You want wisdom to sit on a throne, you want wisdom to drive the geese, but a hero to plough the fields"

*Photos. Balkan News Agency*



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hours' duration, lives in the spacious but half-closed palace, and is attended there by only a small staff. Whilst he does not attempt to control the Government, or to interfere with any measures which it may think necessary, he devotes his whole life to kingly duties. But instead of invariably summoning ministers to the palace, he often goes to their offices, and since his accession, at the end of 1918, he has been gradually getting into direct touch with many of his people, not only in the towns, but in the villages.

### The Prince and His Peasants

With this object he spends a great deal of time motoring and riding through the country, where he talks to the inhabitants, particularly to the women and children, gives weary travellers a lift in his car, and calls upon local officials. This conduct, coupled with a simple, easy manner, is rapidly identifying him with the population, and, whereas the palace and everything emanating from it grew gradually more and more unpopular during the autocratic regime of King Ferdinand, the exact opposite is now the case.

Bulgaria, which is a strictly Constitutional monarchy, is governed in a manner suitable to the history and spirit of the population. The Cabinet is responsible to the King and to the Sobranje (National Assembly), a body made up of one Chamber only, elected by manhood suffrage and upon the principle of proportional representation.

### Real Equality and Fraternity

The administration of justice is vested in the Law Courts, which act in the name of the King, and the Greek, Mahomedan, and Jewish communities possess special autonomous rights with regard to questions of marriage, divorce, and inheritance. The people really consist of only one class, part of which occupies a different position owing to superior education, for, with the complete disappearance of a royal house, of an aristocracy, and of all tradition, there are very few rich. Consequently, even if the existence of almost universal peasant proprietorship constitutes an

obvious guarantee against Bolshevism and against the tenets advocated by city and other workmen, there is in Bulgaria a fundamental atmosphere of equality unknown in almost any other Balkan country. For instance, whatever political party may be in power, statesmen have relations among the populace, ministers talk on terms of friendship with men in sheepskins, and the Governmental services are filled by functionaries of almost peasant origin. And then, while the law on compulsory labour, voted in 1920, is widely criticised from the political, economic, and international standpoints, the fact that a legislative measure, having for its objects education, increase of production, and imposition of a sort of tax in the form of labour, has in fact been passed, proves the democratic attitude of a people who are prepared to make almost any personal sacrifice for the good of their country.

### Where all Religions are Free

The great bulk of the population belongs to the National Church, which does not differ in its doctrines from the Greek Orthodox Church, but the people are attached thereto on patriotic rather than religious ground. This attitude arises partly from a universal knowledge that the actual independence of the country was really won by the struggle which resulted in the recognition by the Sultan of an independent Bulgarian Church in 1870, and from the fact that from then the Church, especially in Macedonia, became one of the strongest instruments in the development of Bulgarian power in the Balkans.

The Church has, no doubt, lost much of its spiritual control because, when it dropped the Greek liturgy, it substituted an old form of Slavic which is equally unintelligible to the vast majority of the people, and because the priests are uneducated and too often greedy for money. But if religion plays no very real part in the life of the average Bulgarian, tolerance exists to a degree unequalled in many a more strict country. Guaranteed complete liberty by the Constitution, there are no



# BULGARIANS

## *In Days of Peace*



*In her brodered gown the Bulgarian peasant moves a very goddess of fruit and flowers as she garners the ripe harvest of wild berries*

Photo, Balkan News Agency





Holding one another's girdles these girls are about to dance the Horo. Timed by the pipe they will step to and fro and then revolve first, but ever more quickly as the dance proceeds

Photo. C. P. A.





*Silver, ribbons, and lace have been hoarded since the day of her birth that at sixteen she might shine in this sumptuous gala dress*

Photo, C. Rider Noble





*Though now freed from Turkish rule this view of Melnik illustrates the proverb, "grass never grows where the Turkish hoof has trod"*

Photo, Balkan News Agency



*Small single roomed huts make up the typical Bulgarian village, lining a muddy road among bleak hills and in winter often snowed in*

Photo, Balkan News Agency





*Dinners for the dead are given in Bulgaria. Here, at Shakavitza, earnest believers are consuming stew for the good of the departed*



*Moslem graveyards are depressing spots. Among these tottering tombs at Dorkovo, Tomaks (Bulgarian Moslems) are at their prayers*

Photo, Balkan News Agency





*If busy hands are any preventive, Bulgarians should never get into mischief. Sober, quiet folk, they are chiefly interested in their farms or, like these street weavers at Dobromiri, in their home industries*





*On market day at Tirnovo you may note the Bulgarian qualities of thrift and industry. The women spin while waiting for a buyer for their vegetables, and all the men are absorbed in business converse*

Photo, Balkan News Agency





*Something of the military swagger of mess uniform attaches to the braided jackets and embroidered shirts of the well-to-do Bulgarian*

Photo, H. Charles Woods



disabilities for the representatives of other creeds, the equality of which is recognized by law. Hence the Mahomedan population, which numbers roughly half a million souls, is properly represented in the Chamber, the Jews are allowed to enjoy the full right of citizenship, and the schools of non-Bulgarian denominations receive grants from the Government.

The people have a passion for education and self-education, and perhaps one of the most marked features in the country is that the intelligentsia class has really become over-large. The result is that a too considerable section of the population desires to avoid manual work and seeks employment in the law, in newspaper offices, and in Government service. Nevertheless, the enormous progress made in education since 1878 is one of the greatest assets possessed by Bulgaria. For this lasting credit should be given to the (American) Robert College and College for Women at Constantinople, where many of the people have graduated; to the American Mission establishments in Bulgaria and Macedonia; and to the Government, which has consistently devoted itself to this branch of the administration.

#### **Farming Comes Before Politics**

With education, which is obligatory, in the hands of the State and of the Communes, and not of the Church, there is now an elementary school in almost every Bulgarian village; there are gymnasia and high schools for more advanced students, and Sofia boasts of an up-to-date university. Hence, wherever one goes, one finds that the standard of knowledge of all classes of the people is exceedingly high, and that, whereas so recently as 1888 only eleven per cent. of the population were literate, now probably at least seventy per cent. can read, write, and cipher.

Bulgaria is essentially an agricultural country, and the Bulgarians are fundamentally a peasant people. With a large part of the whole surface under cultivation, there are only seven towns possessed of a population of over 20,000 inhabitants, more than seventy-five

per cent. of the people are occupied on the land, and, in normal years, between eighty and ninety per cent. of the total exports were provided by the products of the soil. This condition of things is reflected in the Government, in social life, and in the labour market; for whatever party be in power, or whatever policy be under discussion, the attitude of the Bulgarian is influenced by the question whether or not he can be on his farm at the necessary time of the year. Most of the schools are closed for four months beginning with May, and men employed in Governmental or non-agricultural professions are often liberated for the harvest.

#### **Methods Antiquated yet not Obsolete**

But if Bulgaria depends for her prosperity almost exclusively upon the fertility and yield of her soil, it must be admitted that her methods of cultivation are only just beginning to emerge from their primitive stage and that, until recently, her people had not realized the value of the systematic working of the land or of modern implements.

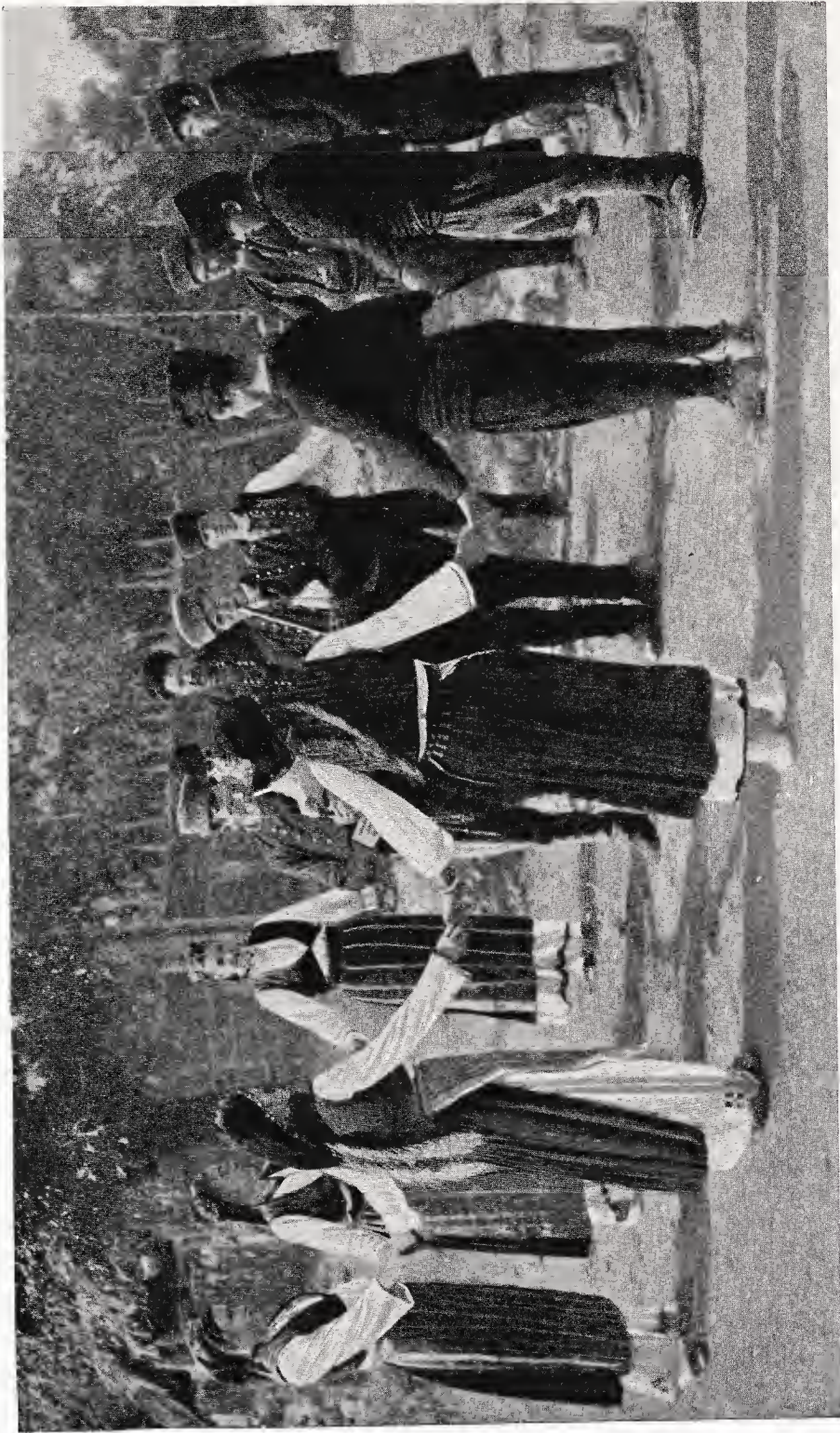
The old-fashioned wooden plough, often made at home, is still in use; the methods of threshing, winnowing, and transport are antique and individual, and up-to-date machinery is conspicuous by its almost entire absence. Nevertheless, during recent years something has been done to improve these conditions.

Agricultural machinery is now admitted to the country free of duty, agrarian schools and model farms have been started, and an agricultural bank has been established. That pioneer institution, which developed into its present form in 1903, enables the farmer to secure advances for the purpose of stocking his land on the security of his cattle and produce, and is thus one of the most important financial and economic organizations in the country.

#### **Products by which Bulgaria Lives**

Wheat, maize, barley, rye, and some oats are the principal cereals, and in 1914 the area devoted to the first was nearly equal to that employed for the tillage of the remaining four





**BULGARIAN LADS AND LASSES DANCING THE HORÓ TO THE ACCOMPANIMENT OF RUDIMENTARY BAGPIPES AND FLUTE**  
 The word "horó" is Turkish, signifying in that language simply "dance"—any dance, but the Balkan Christians have narrowed its meaning and applied it solely to one special dance. The tunes of the horó vary; the majority of them have been composed or arranged in Bulgaria and Serbia, and the Bulgarian, mindful of his Turkish origin, introduced wild and untamed music into most of his horós, which are played "allegro con fuoco," and often in minor keys





#### BULGARIAN SOLDIERS AND CIVILIANS JOIN HANDS IN REVELRY

The soldiers love to dance—and the people love the soldiers—and where soldiers and dancing are to be found, gay crowds are inevitably drawn to the scene of action. An unlimited number can participate in the "Horó," Bulgaria's national dance, and on important festivals the whole village will take part. The dance lasts for an hour or two, and the Horó tune is not unlike a polka

combined. Rice, cotton, sugar beet, and vines are also cultivated, and the rearing of live-stock, together with poultry farming, is carried on. Moreover, the culture of tobacco, which would have become an industry of vastly greater importance had Bulgaria retained the Aegean territory which became hers after the Balkan Wars, is a widespread industry, encouraged by the Government, which still distributes seed and gives a bounty on exports.

Again, the rose-producing and the silkworm breeding businesses are highly developed. Indeed, Bulgaria holds the premier place in these, for her famous otto of roses is known throughout the world. Distilled from red and white flowers, particularly from the former, the success of this trade depends largely upon climatic advantages, such as shelter from the north winds, a full south sun, and considerable moisture, which prevail in the district lying

between the Balkan Range and Philippopolis. These advantages, recently more fully made use of, mean that about 20,000 acres are now devoted to rose culture, and that, whereas in 1901 otto of roses to a value of under £86,000 was exported, in 1911 produce worth over £296,000 actually left the country. With regard to sericulture, too, largely owing to the efforts of the Government and to the excellent quality of the mulberry leaves, the prosperity of that industry is now considerable, and Bulgaria, instead of exporting only cocoons, now sends abroad a limited amount of reeled silk.

The possession of property is governed by certain limitations and restrictions, for the freeholder owns only the surface and nothing beneath it, and at least a part of an inordinate betterment in value belongs or passes to the community. Thus, in the case of the discovery of minerals, or even of a



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mineral spring, the State has certain rights in regard to the area in question, and, in the event of the growth of a city, such as Sofia, the proprietors would be compelled to sell without any undue profits resulting from successful speculation.

This said, we find that peasant proprietorship is universal, and that there are now no large estates except those owned by the monasteries. Indeed, out

does not lead to high production, but the peasants show a special and immense capacity for work, and they are untiring in the care of their level, unfenced glebes.

As the number of horses, or, more correctly, small wiry Balkan ponies, is limited, and as these are unsuited for heavy work, the most common domestic animals are the buffalo, horned stock, mule, donkey, sheep, goat, pig, and dog. The buffalo, used for weighty draught



THE VILLAGE "POPE" AND HIS WHITEWASHED SANCTUARY

The village priest, or Pope, is in most parishes a peasant of the same class as his parishioners, and is usually too occupied with his family, cattle, and plot of land to trouble himself greatly about spiritual matters. Ritual is more important than dogma; to intone well is a greater gift than to possess the power of preaching, and fine figures and flowing beards are indispensable requisites for high ecclesiastical preferment

*Photo, C. Rider Noble*

of nearly 800,000 existing farms fewer than 15,000 consist of over fifty acres, and by far the largest number of holdings range between twelve and eighteen acres. Here the Bulgarian has usually built his own house, of mud and wood, upon the post and pan system, once common in Cornwall and elsewhere. It consists of one storey, divided into two rooms, the floors of which are of hammered clay. The system is not yet intensive, and the small-holding perhaps

purposes, is much prized, but he is delicate and requires much care in this, his northern limit. The native cattle, employed in the cultivation of the soil and for ordinary transportation, and like the buffalo always shod, are small, hardy, and long coated. Sheep, also small and whitefaced, goats which spring from rock to rock, and swine which belong to a special breed, seem the natural adjuncts of many a farm. The village dog, grey, shaggy, and





#### MOUNTAINOUS RETREAT OF THE PATRON SAINT OF BULGARIA

In the seclusion of the beautiful Ryl Planina, Rilo Mountains, Bulgaria's most famous anchorite, John of Ryl, the shepherd, lived in the tenth century, and the first Rilo monastery was built not far from the inaccessible rock which gave him shelter. On the site of the ancient building this magnificent monastery now stands, affording shelter during years of war to thousands of refugees

*Photo, Mrs. Gabriel*



## BULGARIA & THE BULGARS

exceedingly fierce, is for the stranger a terror almost as great as and more common than the bear, which is still prevalent in the mountain forests, or the wolf, which often ravages the homestead, and in winter has been known to approach to the immediate vicinity of Sofia. With red deer somewhat rare, the roe deer is found in the forest, the chamois frequents the higher mountain regions, and the hare is everywhere. Again, while bird life migrates in winter, swans breed on the Danube, and eagles, cranes, wild geese and ducks, and partridges are common. Fish, too, supply an important article of food, for, not to mention the trout which swarm in the mountain streams, the Danube and its lagoons teem with big carp and with silure. Lastly, the Black Sea, unpleasant and inhospitable as it usually is to the traveller, provides three varieties of mackerel, some larger than the British, tunny, and various salt-water fish.

Like other territories which until recently were Turkish, Bulgaria has been largely denuded of her forests, and it will take several generations to make up for the devastation perpetrated for the purpose of obtaining wood and securing land for agricultural purposes. Since the liberation of the country, however, the State, which now controls the forests, has taken measures to save the remaining timber and to bring about a certain amount of afforestation. The grape ripens at the lower altitudes, fruit trees are common in Southern and South-Western Bulgaria, and the lilac groves are characteristic.

In regard to industries, including minerals, with the exception of agriculture, Bulgaria is still in a stage of infancy. This is due partly to a lack of the home capital necessary to put the manufactures of the kingdom on a sound basis; partly to the reluctance of foreign capitalists to invest money in a country which has always refused



BRETHREN OF THE "BLACK CLERGY" OF BULGARIA

The Greek Orthodox faith is the recognized religion of the State. Church government is vested in the Holy Synod, ecclesiastical appointments being subject to the Government's approval. The laity take part in the election of metropolitans and parish priests. Only the "black clergy," or monks are eligible for the episcopate. Besides the stipend which the clergy receive from the Treasury, they are allowed fixed fees for exceptional religious services

*Photo, C. Rider Noble*





#### BLACK-ROBED MEMBERS OF A RELIGIOUS SISTERHOOD

They lead hard-working, industrious lives, and several hours of the daily routine are devoted by them to teaching and tending various members of the laity. Bulgaria possesses about a dozen convents, and her few hundred nuns are regarded with considerable respect and deference. The calendar of the Greek Orthodox Church contains nearly eighty religious holidays, many of which are kept as work-suspending festivals by the community at large

*Photo, C. Rider Noble*

to sell herself for commercial purposes ; and partly, if not very largely, to the fact that it may well be more economic for the Bulgarians to continue to devote themselves to their natural rural pursuits, and to rely for fabricated articles upon goods imported from abroad. With public opinion still divided upon this last question, the Government has, however, endeavoured to stimulate home industry, and, with this object in view, legislation, giving considerable privileges to concerns above a certain size, has been passed, technical schools have been established, chambers of commerce have been opened, and cooperation has begun to make its appearance.

Nevertheless, under existing conditions, the textile industry is the most important, and coal alone among the minerals is advantageously exploited. Local wool, which has to be augmented by imports from abroad, is worked up into rough homespun cloths, serges, braids, stockings, gloves, shawls, and carpets, and in normal times many

of these articles were exported. As the Bulgarians devote themselves almost exclusively to the material side of life, they have no arts to attract foreign attention ; they boast of no dramatists, sculptors, painters, or writers with an international reputation. It, therefore, only remains to repeat that cold, undemonstrative, and reserved as they may be, these people are possessed of sterling qualities which preclude them from disappearance into oblivion. They have built up a modern country in just over forty years. They have established a government which is certainly no worse than those of the older neighbouring states. And they have created educational and agricultural systems unequalled elsewhere in the Balkans. Unfortunately for them, the Bulgarians took the wrong side in the war, but time will yet prove that they are destined to play their part in that regenerated world, which one must still hope will be the outcome of the European conflagration.



# Bulgaria

## II. The Troubled History of the Bulgars

By Sir Reginald Rankin, D.L., M.A.

Author of "The Inner History of the Balkan War"

THE Bulgars are a Finnish people from the Volga, but speak the Slavonic language of the inhabitants whom they found settled in the Roman province of Moesia when they entered it under Asparuch in A.D. 679. By the ninth century the Slavs and Bulgars were welded into one race. During the two preceding centuries they had been alternately the allies and the assailants of the East Roman or Byzantine Empire, and but for the skill of their leader Cerig, Constantine V. would have annexed Bulgaria about 760.

In 809 Crumn, their greatest heathen prince, took Serdica, now Sofia, from the Greeks, captured the Emperor Nicephorus who tried to recover it, beheaded him, and used his skull as a goblet. Four years later Crumn besieged Constantinople, but was driven back, carrying off among his captives the future emperor, Basil I. Crumn's successor, Omortag, made peace with the Greeks and attacked the Franks, who, under Charlemagne, had occupied Croatia. Omortag persecuted, though without success, those of his subjects whom their Greek captives had converted to Christianity.

### How Bulgaria Joined the Eastern Church

In 864, Omortag's successor, Boris, turned Christian, being baptized into the Greek Church, mainly through his fear that he would be isolated by the conversion of the neighbouring rulers. He hesitated, however, between the Eastern and Western Churches, and when the Greeks refused to sanction a Bulgarian patriarchate, sent to consult Pope Nicholas I. The Pope sent two bishops to study the state of Bulgaria, but evaded his request for a Bulgarian archbishopric. His evasion led Boris to address himself again to Constantinople, where his former captive, Basil I., now reigned. In 869 a council determined that Bulgaria should belong to the Eastern Church, as she still does. Boris' grandson, Simeon, founded the first Bulgarian empire (893-1018).

In 913 Simeon besieged Constantinople unsuccessfully, took Adrianople in 915, and in 917 utterly defeated the Greeks, who were only saved from ruin because the Emperor Leo VI., the Philosopher, called in the Magyars under Arpad to his aid; Arpad attacked Simeon's capital, Preslav, and thus prevented him from occupying Constantinople as the capital

of a Greco-Slav realm. Simeon had previously occupied Serbia, and died the master of a kingdom which included Bulgaria, most of Eastern Rumelia and Eastern Macedonia, Serbia east of the Ibar, Epirus, and Albania. Simeon took the title of "Tsar and Autocrat of all the Bulgarians and Greeks," and wore the purple of a Porphyrogenitus. The Pope sent him a royal crown and constituted a Bulgarian patriarchate. The oldest Bulgarian literature dated from his day, and learned ecclesiastics translated for him the works of Greek historians and theologians. He died in 927.

### Heresy, Persecution, and Revolt

His successor, Peter, long remained in close relations with Constantinople. They were interrupted when, in 967, Nicephorus Phocas allied himself with the Russians, under Sviatoslav, and with their aid sought to conquer Bulgaria. Sviatoslav's occupation of Silistria, however, terrified Nicephorus, who made peace with Peter, but Serbia had recovered its independence, and a Bulgarian noble, Sisman, established a kingdom for himself in Macedonia and Albania. Religious disputes accelerated the decline of Bulgaria. Bogomil and his followers taught that Christianity was nothing but a struggle between the good and evil deities, and their sect grew numerous. In 971 John Zimisce overran Sisman's Empire, and deposed Boris II. Ten years later the Bulgarians revolted under Sisman's fourth son, Samuel, but after a forty years' struggle their country was finally occupied in 1018 by the "Bulgarian Slayer," Basil II. From that date until 1186 Bulgaria remained a part of the Greek Empire. Its Church was respected, but the people were overtaxed, and the Bogomils persecuted.

In 1186, however, Peter and Ivan Asen, of Tirnovo, two brothers descended from Sisman, who had been insulted by the palace officials at Constantinople, took advantage of the discontent occasioned by the taxes imposed by Isaac Angelus on his marriage with a Hungarian princess, to head a revolt. The Byzantine armies were easily defeated, and aided by the Serbians, Wallachs, and Kumans, Ivan Asen drove them from Bulgaria, and all but took Isaac himself prisoner. Just as he was about to attack Constantinople, however, he was assassinated by Ivanko, Ivan's brothers, Peter and Kaloyan,



## BULGARIA'S STORY

succeeded him ; but after Peter's murder in 1197, Kaloyan reigned alone over Bulgaria, the Dobruja, Eastern Serbia, and Eastern Macedonia ; but the Greeks refused to recognize him as Tsar. Kaloyan turned to the Papacy, and, in 1199, received a flattering letter from Innocent III., who, reminding him of his descent from a Roman, called upon him to recognize the supremacy of Rome. Thereupon, Kaloyan yielded up his kingdom to the Pope as his suzerain, and in 1204 was crowned by a cardinal as king. In the same year the Crusaders took Constantinople, and created Baldwin of Flanders Emperor. Baldwin refused Kaloyan's overtures on the ground that he was a rebel against the Greeks, and invaded Bulgaria. In April, 1205, he was defeated by Kaloyan before Adrianople, taken prisoner, and died a captive.

In 1218 Kaloyan died, and was succeeded by Ivan Asen II. (1218-41) who raised the glory of Bulgaria to its height, and dreamed of ruling over a Slavonic Empire from Constantinople. He was a good ruler, and promoted the welfare of his subjects, not only by his peaceful policy, but by his commercial treaty with Ragusa, his country's natural outlet on the Adriatic. Breaking off all relations with Rome, he re-established the autonomy of the Bulgarian Church with its centre at Tirnovo. The Latins at Constantinople trembled before Ivan Asen, and Baldwin II. came to England to implore Henry III. for help against him. An inscription in Tirnovo Cathedral records Ivan's victories.

"In the year 1230, I, Ivan Asen, Tsar and Autocrat of the Bulgarians, conquered all lands from Okrin" (Adrianople) "to Drac" (Durazzo) "the Greek, the Albanian, and the Serbian land. Only the towns round Carigrad" (Constantinople) "and that city itself did the Frazii" (Franks) "hold, but these two subjected themselves to my rule."

Ivan Asen II. died in 1241. Sixteen years later his empire was in the dust. The Greeks, the Serbians, and the Macedonians had recovered their independence, and in 1257 his dynasty ended with the death of Kaliman II. Bulgaria broke up into separate states, and though for a moment Michael, the ruler of Widin (1323) nearly occupied Constantinople, he was defeated at Kustendil in 1330 by the Serbian king, Stephen Dushan, and the Serbs

became the masters of Bulgaria. In 1344, however, the Turks crossed into Europe. By 1360 they had made Adrianople their capital, and in 1366 forced the Bulgarian Tsar, Sisman III., to become their vassal, for his predecessor, Ivan Alexander, had refused to cooperate with the Greeks in opposing them, and Sisman himself had seized the Emperor John Palaeologus when he came to implore his aid. A few years later Sultan Murad I. occupied Sofia by a trick, and in 1389, in the battle of Kossovo, laid the Balkans at his feet by defeating the Serbs, the Bosniaks, and the Albanians. In 1398 Bulgaria became a Turkish province.

By the capture of Bulgaria the Turks gained the key to Europe, for not only did they cut off Constantinople from the rest of Christendom, but they gained the passages over the lower Danube and the roads into the Ibar and the Morava valleys, the gateways for an invader from the east into Hungary, Austria, and North Italy. Bulgaria had been ruined by its aristocracy, who turned the commons into serfs ; and by its clergy, whose persecutions drove the Bogomils into the arms of the Turks.

Under the Turks Bulgaria sank into misery. A few of the nobles turned Moslem—the rest fled into Wallachia. The cities in the plains lay waste ; their inhabitants carried on a guerrilla warfare



THE KINGDOM OF BULGARIA

against the Turks from the mountains. Greek clergy replaced the native priesthood ; Greek became the language of public worship and of civil life. About 1760, when Russian influence began to replace that of Austria in the Balkans, Bulgarian literature revived with Bishop Sofronii and the historian, Paisii, whose history of Bulgaria re-awoke the national spirit. In 1835 a Bulgarian school was



opened at Gabrovo; and in 1870, as a counterpoise to the Greek agitation, the Turks recognized the Bulgarian Exarchate, which was excommunicated by the Greek Patriarch in 1872. This decree occasioned the subsequent troubles in Macedonia.

### Gladstone and the "Bulgarian Atrocities"

In 1876 a report that the Christians were to be massacred brought about a rising near Philippopolis. It was put down with terrible severity. The report of the massacre at Batak reached Europe through the "Daily Telegraph" correspondent at Constantinople; but though Disraeli treated his story as "coffee-house babble," Gladstone, by his pamphlet on the Bulgarian atrocities, drove Russia into war with Turkey. The siege of Plevna, the greatest event in the campaign, took place in Bulgaria. In February, 1878, when the Russians were within twelve miles of Constantinople, the Turks signed a treaty at San Stefano, which re-constituted a Greater Bulgaria extending from the Danube to the Aegean and from the Black Sea to the Albanian mountains, giving Bulgaria an Aegean port at Kavala, and leaving only Adrianople, Salonica, and Chalcidice to Turkey.

Britain fearing, though wrongly, that this Bulgaria would become a Russian province, secured the revision of the treaty in the interests of Turkey. In June, 1878, the Congress of Berlin stripped Bulgaria of Macedonia and Thrace, which it returned to the Sultan with a futile provision that he should introduce organic reform into his European provinces, a promise never fulfilled. Bulgaria was divided into two parts, the northern a tributary principality, the southern (or Eastern Rumelia) with a Christian governor and a Constitution sanctioned by the Powers.

### Tsar Ferdinand Assumes the Throne

Prince Alexander of Battenberg, a nephew of the then Russian Empress, was elected Prince of Bulgaria, but he proved a man of independent will. In September, 1885, Eastern Rumelia joined Bulgaria, and a war with Serbia, in which Bulgaria was victorious, followed. The Russians, enraged by his insubordination, drove Alexander into exile. He was succeeded, against the will of the Powers, by Ferdinand of Coburg, a German prince and Hungarian magnate, who was not recognized as Prince of Bulgaria and Governor-General of Eastern Rumelia until 1896. In 1909 Bulgaria declared itself an independent kingdom. Ferdinand assumed the title of Tsar, and, as such, entered into the war with Turkey in October, 1912. A Catholic himself, he had

allowed his son and heir, Boris, to be baptized as an infant into the Greek Church.

The actual author of the Balkan War of 1912 was James D. Bouchier, the "Times" correspondent in the Balkans. Knowing that the Christians in Macedonia were anxious to revolt against Turkish cruelty, he induced Bulgaria, Greece, and Serbia to combine in a treaty to force the Porte to effect the reforms in European Turkey promised by Article 23 of the Treaty of Berlin. The treaties, which provided for common action, for the provision of a joint army, and for dividing between Bulgaria and Serbia any territories which might be conquered in Macedonia, were signed early in 1912, with the approval of Russia. In September, 1912, Montenegro, which had joined the alliance, began hostilities against Turkey. On October 18th Bulgaria proclaimed war. The Bulgarians entered Thrace, and after brilliant victories at Kirk Kilisse and Lule Burgas drove back the Turks to the lines of Chatalja, and might, indeed, but for an outbreak of cholera and the failure of their transport, have entered Constantinople by November 10th. The lines of Chatalja proved impregnable.

### How Treachery was Twice Rewarded

With Serbian help the Bulgars laid siege to Adrianople. In December the Great Powers forced the combatants to conclude an armistice. A Conference of the Balkan States assembled in London to conclude peace. Negotiations fell through on the Adrianople question. Hostilities were resumed in January, 1913. Adrianople fell on March 25th, and the Great Powers offered Bulgaria a line east of that city from Enos to Midia as their frontier in Thrace. A second Balkan conference met in London in April. Early in the war, Todorov with a Bulgarian force had advanced upon Salonica to cooperate with the Greeks, who, however, had occupied the place when he arrived. The Bulgarians also seized Kavala on the Aegean.

The friction between Greece and Bulgaria about Salonica, and the claims of Serbia to compensation for the loss of her promised outlet on the Adriatic and for her efforts at Adrianople led to the second Balkan war, which broke out almost before the ink was dry on the Treaty of London (May 30th, 1913). Under this treaty Bulgaria received the Enos-Midia line, Southern Thrace with Kavala, and part of Eastern Macedonia; but while Greece received Salonica, Serbia remained an inland Power, although her claims were supported by Russia. Austria took advantage of the situation, and in her desire to weaken the Austrian Serbs, urged Ferdinand of Bulgaria to



## BULGARIA'S STORY

resist the Serbian claims. On June 28th Ferdinand attacked Serbia.

His treachery was punished. Greece and Rumania, who wanted to secure from Bulgaria Silistria and an extension of her coastline in the Dobruja, came to the aid of Serbia. In September Bulgaria was forced to sign the Treaty of Bukarest, by which she gave up Kavala to Greece, her Macedonian conquests to Greece and Serbia, and conceded the Rumanian demands, while Turkey retained Adrianople, which she had re-occupied in July. Thus, of all her conquests, Bulgaria kept only a part of Southern Thrace, with the port of Dedeagatch.

Ferdinand turned to the German Emperor; and within two months after the outbreak of the Great War concluded a treaty binding him to intervene on the side of Germany and Austria. But in November, 1914, Turkey declared war against the Entente; Britain attacked the Dardanelles, and all the Balkan politicians awaited the issue in suspense.

During the spring of 1915, Bulgaria seemed inclined to take the side of the Entente; but she would only do so if they agreed to secure her the retrocession of Kavala from Greece, to which, in view of the attitude of the military party at Athens, it was almost impossible for any Greek statesman to consent.

But the failure of the British at Suvla Bay in August and their impending retreat from Gallipoli convinced Ferdinand that Germany would be victorious. In September, 1915, he took the field against

Serbia, and France and Britain declared war against him.

With German help Serbia was quickly overrun. Behind Salonica the Bulgarians held in check the forces of the Entente. When, however, Rumania, confiding in Bulgarian neutrality, joined the Entente in August, 1916, and hurried her troops into Transylvania, the Bulgarians, led by Mackensen, entered the Dobruja, crossed the Danube, and by March, 1917, had driven the Rumanians back to Jassy. By the Treaty of Bukarest signed a year later, Bulgaria recovered all the territories she had lost in September, 1913, and in addition received the Dobruja with the Sulina mouth of the Danube. Ferdinand seemingly was now the master of the Balkans.

But his people were worn out with six years of warfare; the British victories in Mesopotamia and Palestine were shaking the Turkish power; Austria and Germany could send little help. In August, 1918, secret agents from Malikoff, the Bulgarian premier, arrived in London, and Bulgaria laid down her arms on September 28th, 1918. Ferdinand fled to Vienna; his heir, Boris, received the crown.

By the Treaty of Neuilly, 1919, Bulgaria paid the penalty of her ruler's treachery. She ceded her Macedonian territories to Serbia, and her coastland in Thrace to Greece, thus losing Dedeagatch and becoming once more an agricultural State with outlets only to the Black Sea at Varna and at Burgas. The Dobruja was restored to Rumania.

## BULGARIA: FACTS AND FIGURES

### The Country

Independent kingdom consisting of northern and southern Bulgaria, or eastern Rumelia, the two divisions being separated by the Balkans. By the Treaty of Neuilly, 1919, Thrace, with the Aegean littoral, was ceded to Greece, Strumitza to Yugo-Slavia, Dobruja to Rumania. Bounded north by Rumania and the Danube, west by Yugo-Slavia, east by the Black Sea, south by Greece and Turkey. Area, 42,000 square miles; population, 5,000,000. The country is watered by the Isker, Struma, and Maritza.

### Government and Constitution

Executive is a council of ministers nominated by King. Legislation is in hands of the Sobranje, a single chamber elected for four years, whose laws require royal assent. Manhood suffrage is universal, and under proportional representation one member is returned for every 20,000 electors. Members are paid. Questions affecting throne or constitution, and other vital matters, are decided by specially elected Grand Sobranje. Local government is carried on by prefects.

### Defence

By Treaty of Neuilly, 1919, strength of the army, during war 500,000, must not exceed 20,000 men. There is a frontier guard of 3,000; police,

armed gendarmes, forest guards, and Customs officials are limited to 10,000. Four torpedo-boats and six motor-boats maintained on the Danube.

### Commerce and Industries

Bulk of the people are engaged in agriculture, most being peasant proprietors, and the country is rich in livestock. About 5,000,000 acres are under cultivation for wheat, barley, oats, maize, and rice. Other industries are silk, wine, tobacco, and otto of roses. Limestone and marble are quarried, and there are coal and other minerals not yet developed. Imports, 1919, £3,860,000; exports, £2,209,000.

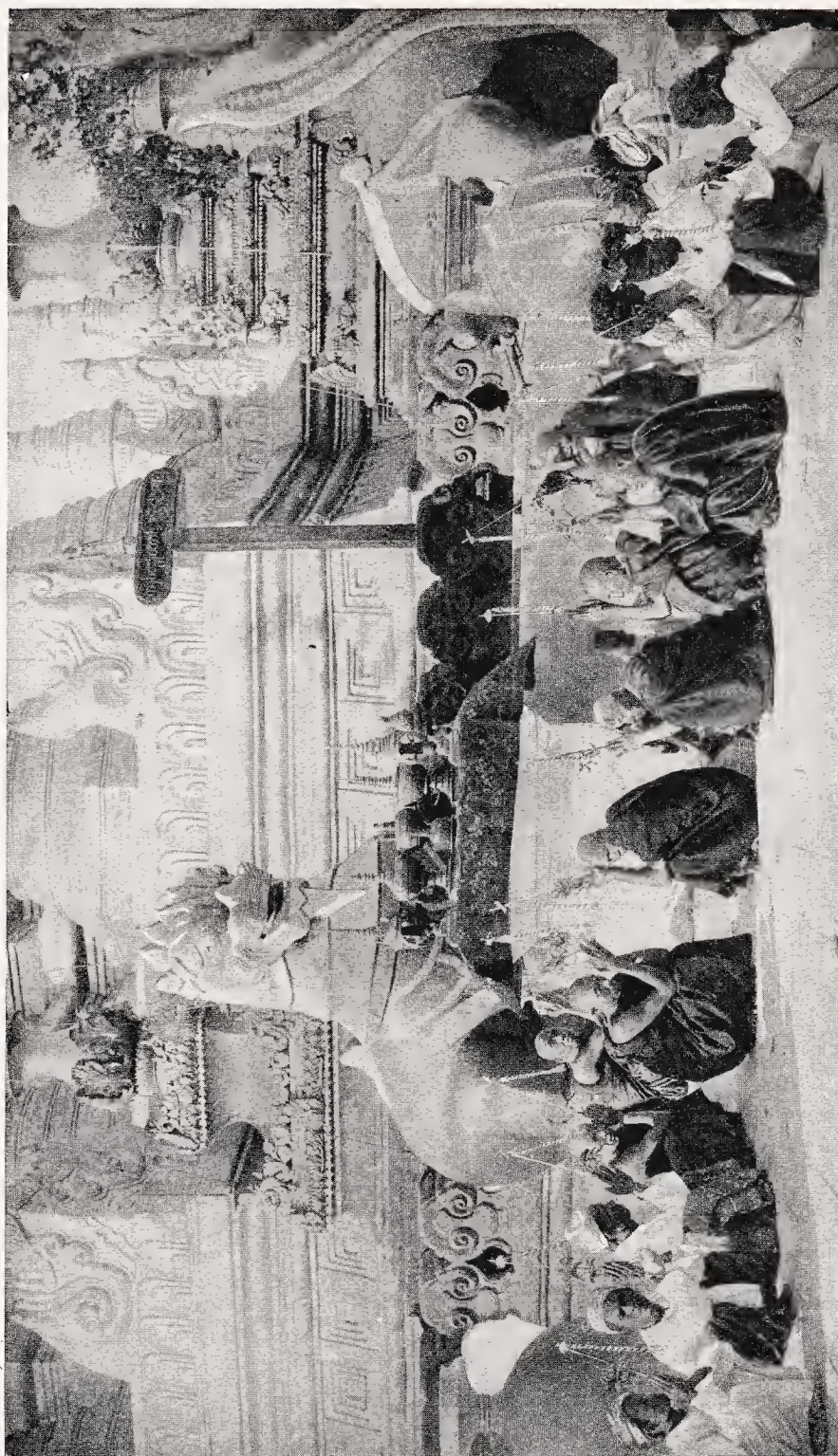
### Religion and Education

Four-fifths of the population belong to the Orthodox Greek Church. Elementary education is free and compulsory up to fourteen. There are technical schools, and Sofia has a university.

### Chief Towns

Capital, Sofia (population, 482,000), Tirnovo (448,000), Philippopolis (447,000), Stara Zagora (443,000), Rustchuk (407,000), Plevna (366,000), Burgas (352,000), and Varna (330,000) are Black Sea ports. An economic outlet to the Aegean was guaranteed by the Treaty of Neuilly





AT PRAYERS IN THE SHWE DAGÓN PAYAH, BURMAH'S MOST GORGEOUS SHRINE

Finest and most venerable of all places of worship in the Indo-Chinese countries is the great pagoda of Rangoon. A broad-flagged space runs all round the profusely gilded payah, and this is left free for worshippers. At the corners of the basement are ruffled-crested Assyrian-like creatures, half lion, half man. Before these are high stone altars for offerings of rice and flowers, and underneath are niches for burnt offerings